

## MOONRISE KINGDOM

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



If you don't believe in love at first sight – and even if you do – *Moonrise Kingdom* is proof that there really is instant love in the world. At any age, but especially during adolescence, the ability to love and to be loved is not an easy landscape to navigate. There is danger everywhere in the woods of childhood. Those who have been scarred, who don't fit in and who live outside the norm need but do not get enough love. They become withdrawn, odd, weird and act out in ways that their parents just don't understand usually because of their own eccentricities.

*Moonrise Kingdom* is magical because this all happens in a time and place when innocence was still possible and young love was not so tainted by life experience. Set in 1960's New England, the whole movie is filled with beautiful images and settings that fully enhance the story. It is nostalgic, warm, funny and sad all at the same time. Director Wes Anderson blends just the right amount of whimsy and angst into the mixture of emotional stormy winds that blow throughout the story. This is a place where the adults are just as affected as the children.

Sam and Suzy are two well-matched 12-year-old misfits who meet and find comfort, solace and joy in just being together. Summer camp becomes a sort of Camelot where they are the king and queen of their own world. When they are parted, their devotion continues through mail and eventually they make a plan to be together in spite of all the obstacles that would keep them apart. They leave the discomforts of their respective homes where they are neither appreciated nor understood, and head out into the unknown. What happens next is the stuff that fairytales are made of. If all first loves were this good, no one would ever be lonely.

This film deserves to be seen. Although it is not in the theaters, do not miss the opportunity to see it as a rental or cable choice. If you have any romantic feelings in your heart, you will love this picture. Bruce Willis is great as a policeman who really saves the day, and Bill Murray and Frances McDormand are proof that misfits often do make good matches.

Edward Norton provides some comic relief but the real accolades belong to the young actors whose chemistry makes the premise completely believable. I had a smile on my face from beginning to end. I rooted for these two to live together forever. And so they

will in the eternity of the cinema. Few movies are as perfect as *Moonrise Kingdom*. This is a story about finding someone who will accept who you are without judgment or question. It is a lovely tribute to pure love and will remind you of what love really is all about.

I give *Moonrise Kingdom* five campsites.

